



2022 Strategic Communications: H2O Workshop

June 6 – 7 | Saint Kate – The Arts Hotel | Milwaukee, WI

Agenda Current as of 06/02/2022

Monday, June 6

Morning

8:00 – 12:00

Registration

Pre-Function

9:00 – 12:00

*Simone Ballroom,
2 - 4*

Plenary Session I – (Included in Virtual Event Registration)
Welcoming & Opening Remarks

Jean Smith, *Co-Chair, NACWA Communications & Public Affairs Committee*
Senior Manager, Communications & Community Relations
Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District | Cleveland, OH

Tom Sigmund, *NACWA Vice President*
Executive Director
NEW Water | Green Bay, WI

9:15 – 10:30

Finding Your Voice: Key Steps in Establishing Your Utility's Brand and Message

Any effective utility communications strategy, whether via social media, traditional media or even internal communications, must stem from a clear brand and related "voice" in how the utility communicates. But in such a media saturated world, how do you find a voice that will stand out among the others, especially in your local community? How do you find a message that will resonate with your key constituency and stakeholders? A panel of communications experts will help provide tips, do's and don'ts on this important topic.

Bess McCoy, *Co-Chair, NACWA Communications & Public Affairs Committee*
Public Affairs Specialist
Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District | St. Louis, MO

Jamie Floer, *Communications Manager*
Toho Water Authority | Kissimmee, FL

Pamela Flasch, Director of Public Affairs
Beaufort Jasper Water & Sewer Authority | Okatie, SC

Rahkia Nance, Senior Strategic Communications Project Manager
HDR Engineering, Inc. | Vienna, VA

10:30 – 10:45 **Networking Break**

10:45 – 11:55 **Internal Communications: How to Effectively Talk with Your Own Employees**

Among the many lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic for clean water communications professionals, one of the most critical is the importance of internal employee communications – especially for those employees on the front lines. This panel discussion will focus on how to build an effective internal communications strategy, including different ways to reach different members of the organization, how to help customer-facing members of the utility understand their unique role in an overall communications strategy, and how to achieve the broadest buy-in possible from utility staff.

Tricia Garrison, Public Affairs & Education Manager
NEW Water | Green Bay, WI

Matt Wittern, Senior Consultant
Raftelis | Greenwood Village, CO

Jeff Spence, Director, Community Outreach & Business Engagement
Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District | Milwaukee, WI

Afternoon
12:00 – 1:30
Simone Ballroom,
1

Luncheon
Keynote Address
The Milwaukee Transformation Story

Kevin Shafer, Executive Director
Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District | Milwaukee, WI

1:30 – 4:30
Pre-Function **Registration**

1:45 – 4:30
Simone Ballroom,
2 – 4 **Plenary Session II – (Included in Virtual Event Registration)**

1:45 – 3:00 **From the CEO's Suite: Utility Executive Perspectives on Communications Strategies and Challenges**
For utility communications to be successful, they must have support from the highest levels of executive leadership. Listen to a panel of senior utility leaders

talk about how they view communications efforts within their utilities, what they most value about effective communications outreach, what they most want to see from their communications professionals, and the key challenges they face on the communications front.

Tom Sigmund, *NACWA Vice President*

Kevin Shafer, Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District

Michael Mucha, Chief Engineer & Director
Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District | Madison, WI

Brian Hoelscher, *NACWA Board Member*
Executive Director & Chief Executive Officer
Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District | St. Louis, MO

3:00 – 3:15

Networking Break

3:15 – 4:30

Is This Working? Determining Utility Communications Success

It's one thing to develop and implement a utility communications program – it's another thing to determine if the program is actually effective and working the way you want it to. This conversation will focus on developing meaningful benchmarks and key performance indicators (KPI) to measure the success of your comms program, including best practices and how to right-size KPIs for your unique needs.

Jean Smith, *Co-Chair, NACWA Communications & Public Affairs Committee*

Vincent Morris, Vice President of Public Affairs
Clyde Group | Washington, DC

Matt Wittern, Raftelis

4:30

*Simone Ballroom,
2 - 4*

Closing Remarks

Bess McCoy, Co-Chair, NACWA Communications & Public Affairs Committee

Evening

5:30 – 6:30

*The Arc Theater,
1st Floor*

Networking Reception

Tuesday, June 7

Morning

8:30 – 10:00

Registration

Pre-Function

9:00 – 11:30

Simone Ballroom 2

Plenary Session III Opening Remarks

Nathan Gardner-Andrews, Chief Advocacy & Policy Officer
National Association of Clean Water Agencies | Washington, DC

9:05 – 10:15

Roundtable Discussions

Session I – Making the Most of Social Media

We all know how crazy the social media universe has become. So how does a clean water utility implement a successful social media strategy? What platforms should you be posting on and how frequently? How can utilities get the best bang for their buck in using social media, including uses of paid social media, influencers, and presence on emerging platforms? What are effective tactics to attract new users, retain existing users and increase public engagement and awareness? Participate in moderated roundtable discussions with your colleagues to discuss these issues and learn from what others are doing successfully (or perhaps unsuccessfully) in the social media space.

Roundtable Leaders

Simone Ballroom 1

Jean Smith, Co-Chair, NACWA's Communications and
Public Affairs Committee

Erin Haubert, Marketing Manager
Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District | Milwaukee, WI

Simone Ballroom 2

Rahkia Nance, HDR Engineering

Simone Ballroom 3

Vince Morris, Clyde Group

Simone Ballroom 4

Danielle Cloutier, Director of Legislative Affairs
National Association of Clean Water Agencies | Washington, DC

10:15 – 10:30

Transition Break

10:30 – 11:30

Session II – Choose Your Own Adventure!

We will close out our Workshop with a series of different roundtable topics – and you get to pick which one you join! Choose from one of these moderated discussions and join the conversation!

Roundtable Leaders

Simone Ballroom 1

Undergoing a Successful Utility Rebrand

Josh Weinstein, President & Creative Director
Creative Co-op LLC | Exeter, NH

Simone Ballroom 1

Crisis Communications: How to Stay Calm in a Storm

Tricia Garrison, NEW Water

Simone Ballroom 2

Engaging Community Groups & Outside Stakeholders

Crystal Howard, Public Affairs Specialist
Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District | St. Louis, MO

Simone Ballroom 3

Lessons Learned from the Pandemic

Jamie Floer, Toho Water Authority

Simone Ballroom 4

Communicating the Case for a Rate Adjustment

Mae Stevens, Senior Vice President
Banner Public Affairs | Washington, DC

11:30

Closing Remarks and Adjourn

Simone Ballroom 2

Nathan Gardner-Andrews, Chief Advocacy & Policy Officer